

2007 Hurricane Awareness

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Although hurricane season begins June 1 subtropical storm Andrea has already formed in the Atlantic three weeks early. Forecasters are not viewing this storm as a significant threat to the southeast United States, however, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is advising residents living in hurricane prone areas to prepare now for the upcoming hurricane season.

FEMA is urging individuals to take on preparedness as their own personal responsibility.

"Preparedness is a responsibility that FEMA not only aggressively promotes across state, local and federal government, but at a personal level as well." said FEMA Administrator R. David Paulison. "Individuals have to take responsibility though for their own personal safety and have vital resources like food, water, and medicine during critical periods when local first responders may not be there to offer immediate assistance."

You can be prepared by immediately taking the following actions:

Prepare a disaster kit for your home. Stock up on non-perishable food and water to sustain you and your family for up to 72 hours or longer. Ensure you have important papers (e.g. insurance, identification), first aid kit, a supply of prescription medicines and other specialty items in your preparedness kit. In addition, plan to have an emergency kit for your car in case you need to evacuate. While creating a disaster kit, pet owners should remember to pack the necessary items for their pets.

Find more information on preparing your disaster kit:

www.ready.gov/america/getakit/index.html

Create an emergency plan: Know what to do if you have to evacuate. Make sure you know how to contact members of your family and have an emergency contact number for someone out of state that knows where you are in the event of an emergency. Make sure your pet is included in your emergency plan. You may want to offer assistance to an elderly or disabled family member or neighbor that may be alone and may need your help during an emergency. Make your plans ahead of time and practice them.

Be informed: Know evacuation routes and listen to local authorities when asked to evacuate. Everyone should know their risk to storms. Whether you live in a coastal community or inland, speak with your insurance agent now about flood insurance and review your homeowner's policy. Every state is at risk for flooding and homeowners insurance does not cover flood damage. Flood insurance is a cost-effective way to financially prepare for floods. To learn more about your risk and flood insurance, visit www.floodsmart.gov

To stay informed during a storm keep a battery powered radio for weather and evacuation information should you experience a power outage and have extra batteries on hand.

People who live in manufactured housing, such as those residing in FEMA travel trailers and mobile homes, also should be aware of their risk. People should have disaster plans and be ready to vacate their residences when advised by local authorities.

Get involved. Contact your local Citizen Corps Council to learn what efforts your community is taking to prepare for hurricane season, and learn how you can help. Through Councils and Citizen Corps Partner Programs, it is possible to receive training in basic emergency response and find volunteer opportunities to assist your first responders in an emergency. To find a nearby Citizen Corps Council or to learn more about Citizen Corps' Partner Programs, visit www.citizencorps.gov.

Individuals should visit www.fema.gov for more information on how to prepare for hurricanes and other disasters and to obtain a copy of the "Are You Ready" Guide to Citizen Preparedness.

FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.